

INCOMING TELEGRAM

United States
Information Agency825
720a

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SD411

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Classification

ACTION
IAF

RR RUEHCR RUEHIA RUEKDA

INFO:

DE RUMJIR 977AN25/0145Z

I/S

IRS

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R 250130Z ZEA

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO RUEHIA/USIA WASHDC

INFO RUEHCR/SECSTATE WASHDC

RUEKDA/DOD

STATE
CIA
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OSD

STATE GRNC

BT

CONFIDENTIAL ACTION USIA TOUSI 518 INFO DEP
DOD UNN FROM SAIGON JAN 25, 9 AM

FOR IOP/IBS/IAF

DEPT FOR GREENFIELD AND DOD FOR SYLVESTER

IF PREDICTIONS IN NEWS COVERAGE ACCURATE, WE CAN ANTICIPATE
SOME SORT OF SENATE DEBATE ON VIETNAM SITUATION IN NEAR FUTURE.
EXCEPT FOR VOA, COVERAGE OF THIS DEBATE FOR VIETNAM AUDIENCES
WILL BE LARGELY DEPENDENT ON WIRE SERVICE COPY WHICH WILL
UNDOUBTEDLY TEND TO EMPHASIZE MORE EXTREME STATEMENTS FROM
WHATEVER SOURCE. WE ARE SOMEWHAT CONCERNED OVER IMPACT OF ANY
CFN 518 25 9 VOA

State Department review completed

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POSSIBLE STATEMENTS ADVOCATING WITHDRAWAL FROM VIETNAM OR BOMBING OF NORTH ON VIETNAMESE PUBLIC. THERE IS NOT TOO MUCH THAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT VIETNAMESE NEWSPAPER USE OF WIRE SERVICE COPY ALTHOUGH WE WILL SEEK TO WORK WITH SEMI-OFFICIAL VIETNAM PRESS ON MATERIAL WHICH IS ISSUED TO LOCAL PRESS FOR PUBLICATION. ALSO ASSUME THAT VOA WILL PROVIDE ITS USUAL BALANCED COVERAGE.

REMAINING PROBLEM IS AFRS WHICH IS ALSO DEPENDENT ON WIRE SERVICE COPY AND HAS LARGE VIETNAMESE EAVESDROPPING AUDIENCE. IN ABSENCE OF OTHER SOURCES, AFRS WILL HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO BASE ITS BROADCASTS ON WIRE SERVICE STORIES. NORMAL WIRELESS FILE TRANSMISSIONS ARE TOO INFREQUENT TO PROVIDE RUNNING COVERAGE WHICH AFRS NEEDS IF IT IS TO HAVE SUBSTITUTE FOR WIRE SERVICES. WOULD IT BE POSSIBLE TO SET UP SPECIAL RUNNING TRANSMISSION OF BRIEF BALANCED COVERAGE DURING PERIOD OF INTENSE SENATE DEBATE WHICH WE COULD PASS ON TO AFRS FOR BROADCAST? COVERAGE WOULD HAVE TO BE PROVIDED FROM EARLY MORNING TO MIDNIGHT SAIGON TIME. WE BELIEVE THIS WOULD BE EXTREMELY USEFUL CONTRIBUTION TO OUR OVER-ALL INFORMATION EFFORT IN THIS COUNTRY.

RECOGNIZE POSSIBLE DOMESTIC PUBLIC CRITICISM OF THIS PROCEDURE IF IT RECEIVES ATTENTION AND FOR THIS REASON, WE WOULD PROPOSE

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TO UNDERTAKE THIS PROVISION OF COVERAGE FOR AFRS ON INFORMAL
BASIS ONLY. WE ARE OF COURSE NOT SUGGESTING CENSORSHIP OF
SENATE DEBATE IN ANY WAY BUT ARE SEEKING INSTEAD BALANCED
COVERAGE WHICH WILL HELP PUT DEBATE IN PERSPECTIVE. ADVISE.

ZORTHIAN

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